

**REMARKS UNDER 37 CFR § 1.111**

**Formal Matters**

Claims 5-19, 23-30 and 34-42 are pending after entry of the amendments set forth herein.

Claims 1-37 were examined. Claims 1,2,7-9,20,21,31 and 32 were rejected. Claims 10-19,24-30 and 34-37 were allowed. Claims 3-6, 22, 23 and 33 were objected to as depending from a rejected base claim, but containing allowable subject matter.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application in view of the amendments and remarks made herein.

No new matter has been added.

**The Office Action**

In the Official Action of May 6, 2005, the Examiner indicated that the reference to Yuan, "Multiple Imputation for Missing Data: Concepts and New Development" was not considered, since the date of the reference was not supplied. In response thereto, Applicant is submitting, concurrently herewith, a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement to resubmit the reference and its abstract, along with the date. The Examiner is respectfully requested to initial the PTO Form 1449 submitted with the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement, and return a copy of the same with the next Official Action to indicate consideration of the references submitted.

Claims 1-2, 7-9, 20-21 and 31-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Minor, U.S. Patent No. 6,188,969. Although Applicant does not agree with the Examiner's stated reasons for this ground of rejection, in order to advance the prosecution of the instant application to allowance, Applicant has canceled claims 1,2,20-21 and 31-32 without prejudice to the possibility of filing one or more continuing applications directed to the subject matter recited therein, and without acquiescing to this ground of rejection. Claims 7-9 have been amended to depend from new claim 38, and claim 32 has been amended to depend from new claim 41. It is respectfully submitted that new claims 38 and 41 are allowable for the reasons stated below.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1-2, 7-9, 20-21 and 31-32 under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Minor, U.S. Patent No. 6,188,969, as being moot.

Claims 3-6, 22, 23 and 33 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but

the Examiner indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response thereto, Applicant has submitted new claim 38, which combines the recitations of canceled claims 1 and 4; new claim 39, which combines the recitations of canceled claims 1-3; new claim 40, which combines the recitations of canceled claims 20-22; new claim 41, which combines the recitations of canceled claims 31 and 33; and new claim 42, which combines the recitations of claims 20 and 23. Claims 3-6, 22, 23 and 33 have been canceled without prejudice to the possibility of filing one or more continuing applications directed to the subject matter recited therein.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the objection to claims 3-6, 22, 23 and 33 as being no longer appropriate.

Applicant wishes to extend his thanks to the Examiner for the allowance of claims 10-19, 24-30 and 34-37.

### **Conclusion**


Applicant submits that all of the claims are in condition for allowance, which action is requested. If the Examiner finds that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any underpayment of fees associated with this communication, including any necessary fees for extensions of time, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1078, order number 10030209-1.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 6/17/05

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